Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BEIRUT 02764 01 OF 02 100757Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 MCT-01 ACDA-07 IO-13 OMB-01 TRSE-00
CAB-02 COME-00 DOTE-00 EB-07 EPG-02 FAA-00 SY-05
OPR-02 USSS-00 A-01 SCS-03 SCA-01 DHA-02 /115 W
----------100823Z 014708 /15

P R 100637Z JUN 77
FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4266
INFO SIT-REP COLLECTIVE 260
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER
USNMR SHAPE BELGIUM
CINCUSNAVEUR, LONDON ENG
CINCUSAFE RAMSTEIN AB GER
COMSIXTHFLT
CTF SIX ZERO
CTF SIX ONE
CTF SIX TWO
CTG SIX ZERO PT TWO
FICEURLANT NORFOLK VA
FOSIF ROTA SPAIN
DIA WASHDC
CINCUSAREUR HEIDELBERG GER
USDOCOSOUTH NAPLES IT

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 BEIRUT 2764

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINS PINT MILI LE
SUBJ: LEBANESE SITUATION JUNE 3-9

REF: BEIRUT 2664 (DTG 031836Z JUN 77)

1. SUMMARY: THIS WEEK, SAIQA AND REJECTION FRONT FORCES CLASHED NORTH OF TYRE, AND HEAVY SHELLING CONTINUED IN CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 02 BEIRUT 02764 01 OF 02 100757Z

SOUTH. SYRIAN FONMIN KHADDAM VISITED BEIRUT AND DENIED HIS GOVERNMENT WAS CONTEMPLATING SECURITY PACT WITH LEBANON. BEIRUT RADIO COMMENTED THAT "BROAD NATIONAL" (MUSLIM) FRONT (AS PROPOSED BY SYRIA), OR EXPANDED CABINET WERE NEEDED FOR "POLITICAL DETENTE." MEA PLANE WAS HIJACKED. THERE WERE SEVERAL UNEXPLAINED BOMB INCIDENTS IN BEIRUT AREA. A SERIOUS CONFRONTATION AROSE WITHIN MILITIA ELEMENTS OF LEBANESE FRONT

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009

BETWEEN "TANZIM" ON ONE HAND, AND PHALANGE AND NLP ON OTHER.
WALID JUNBLATT RETURNED TO LEBANON. END SUMMARY.

2. FIGHTING NORTH OF SIDON.
ACCORDING TO VARIETY OF SOURCES, THERE HAS BEEN HEAVY FIGHTING OVER LAST SEVERAL DAYS BETWEEN SAIQA AND REJECTION FRONT ELEMENTS IN ABU AL ASWAD AREA, ON COAST ROAD BETWEEN SIDON AND TYRE. FIGHTING BEGAN JUNE 4, WHEN TROOPS OF SAIQA AND AHMED JABRIL FACTION OF PFLP/GC TRIED TO PUSH SOUTH TO ENTER TYRE BUT WERE BLOCKED BY REJECTION FRONT FIGHTERS INCLUDING ABU ABBAS FACTION OF PFLP/GC. THERE HAVE BEEN TOTAL OF ABOUT 40 WOUNDED ON BOTH SIDES. SAIQA IS REPORTEDLY REGROUPING FOR NEW PUSH TO ENTER TYRE, AND MORE FIGHTING IS EXPECTED. SAIQA HAS BEEN ATTEMPTING TO REESTABLISH ITSELF IN TYRE OVER LAST SEVERAL MONTHS, AND SIMILAR CLASHES HAVE OCCURRED PERIODICALLY.

3. HEAVY SHELLING IN SOUTH.
HEAVY SHELLING CONTINUED IN SOUTH ON A DAILY BASIS. ACCORDING TO LEBANESE MILITARY SOURCES, ISRAELIS HAVE RECENTLY OPENED NEW ROAD FROM ISRAEL TO KAFR SHUBA AND HAVE BEEN SENDING SMALL PATROLS INTO TOWN OVER LAST FEW DAYS. PALESTINIANS HAVE BEEN VERY APPREHENSIVE ABOUT POSSIBLE MAJOR ISRAELI ATTACK IN SOUTH.

4. SYRIAN FONMIN VISITS BEIRUT.
SYRIAN FONMIN KHADDAM VISITED BEIRUT JUNE 8 FOR FIRST TIME SINCE MARCH 1976 AND MET WITH PRESIDENT SARKIS AND FONMIN BOUTROS. LOCAL PRESS SPECULATED KHADDAM HAD COME TO
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PREPARE MEETING BETWEEN PRESIDENTS ASAD AND SARKIS LATER THIS MONTH.

BEIRUT RADIO HAD REPORTED EARLIER ON JUNE 4 THAT SYRIAN OFFICIALS HAD PROPOSED TO CAMILLE CHAMOUN DURING HIS JUNE 2-3 VISIT TO DAMASCUS THAT GOL AND SARG CONCLUDE "SECURITY AGREEMENT." ACCORDING TO BROADCAST, SYRIAN OFFICIALS HAVE ASSERTED THAT SUCH AGREEMENT WOULD BE NEEDED FOR SEVERAL REASONS, "INCLUDING THE FACT THAT LEBANON WILL BE IN NEED OF A SECURITY FORCE IF THE MANDATE OF THE ARAB SECURITY FORCES IS NOT EXTENDED AGAIN." KHADDAM, HOWEVER, DENIED TO REPORTERS THAT SYRIA WAS CONTEMPLATING SECURITY PACT WITH LEBANON.

5. POLITICAL MOVES EXPECTED.
IN UNUSUAL BROADCAST, LEBANON'S OFFICIAL BEIRUT RADIO JUNE 6 COMMENTED THAT TWO OF "MOST IMPORTANT" SUGGESTIONS FOR ACHIEVING "POLITICAL DETENTE" AT PRESENT WERE: (1) PROPOSAL, FAVORED BY SYRIA, TO FORM "BROAD NATIONAL FRONT"

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009

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(OF MUSLIM GROUPS) "TO HOLD A DIALOGUE" WITH (CHRISTIAN) KFUR FRONT; AND (2) "EXPANSION OF THE GOVERNMENT TO INCLUDE, IN ADDITION TO THE PRESENT MINISTERS, REPRESENTATIVES OF THE PRINCIPAL POLITICAL SIDES." NEED FOR "MORE POLITICAL CABINET" HAS BEEN PERSISTENT THEME OF LEBANESE WHO BELIEVE THAT GOVERNMENT OF TECHNOCRATS CANNOT BEGIN TO DEAL WITH POLITICAL SOLUTION FOR LEBANON. MEDIA AND POLITICAL CIRCLES GENERALLY EXPECT MAJOR POLITICAL MOVES BY GOVERNMENT IN NEXT FEW WEEKS.

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PAGE 01 BEIRUT 02764 02 OF 02 100733Z
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 BEIRUT 2764

6. MEA PLANE HIJACKED.

ON JUNE 5 LEBANESE MAN IN A WHEELCHAIR HIJACKED MIDDLE EAST AIRLINES BOEING 707 EN ROUTE TO BAGHDAD FROM BEIRUT AND

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Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009

FORCED PLANE TO LAND IN KUWAIT. HIJACKER ASKED FOR $1.5 MILLION
IN RANSOM, BUT MADE NO POLITICAL DEMANDS. POLICE IN KUWAIT
OVERPOWERED HIM AND SECURED RELEASE OF ALL 102 PASSENGERS AND
11 CREW MEMBERS UNHARMED. THERE WERE NO AMERICANS ON BOARD.
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PAGE 02 BEIRUT 02764 02 OF 02 100733Z

7. BOMB INCIDENTS.

THERE HAVE BEEN AT LEAST THREE EXPLOSIONS IN WEST BEIRUT
AND AT LEAST ONE IN JUNIEH OVER LAST WEEK, BUT NO REPORTED
CASUALTIES. OUR BEST INFORMATION IN THAT BOMBS WERE CARE-
FULLY PLACED, AND TIMED, TO AVOID CASUALTIES AND SIGNIFICANT
DAMAGE. THIS WOULD SEEM TO RULE OUT PERSONAL VENDETTA
MOTIVES OR HOOLIGANISM. BOMBS MAY BE POLITICALLY INSPIRED,
EITHER AS REMINDER THAT "THE RESISTANCE LIVES" OR TO PROVIDE
CONTINUING JUSTIFICATION FOR TIGHT SECURITY CONTROLS.

8. TANZIM LEADERSHIP CRISIS?

ACCORDING TO LEBANESE MILITARY SOURCES, ON JUNE 2 AND 3
SUPPORTERS OF ABU ROY ATTEMPTED TO OUST GEORGE ADWAN AND HIS
FOLLOWERS FROM TANZIM HEADQUARTERS IN ASHRAFIYAH. FIGHTING
RESULTED LARGELY FROM PERSONAL SUSPICIONS THAT ADWAN IS DOUBLE
AGENT. HOWEVER, ADWAN HIMSELF SAYS ABU ROY, WHO WAS EXPELLED FROM
TANZIM SEVERAL MONTHS AGO, IS ACTING ON BEHALF OF BECHIR
GEMAYEL, WHO WANTS TO CONTROL TANZIM. ADWAN SAYS HE IS STILL
IN CHARGE AND STILL IS TANZIM REPRESENTATIVE ON LEBANESE
FRONT "UNITED MILITARY COMMAND." (TANZIM OR "ORGANIZATION"
IS SECRETIVE CHRISTIAN FRONT ORGANIZATION, PERHAPS OF SEVERAL
HUNDRED MEMBERS, MANY OF WHOM ARE HIGHLY EDUCATED, WHICH
REPUTEDLY UNDERTOOK SOME OF MORE VIOLENT CHRISTIAN ACTIONS
DURING WAR, BUT ESCHEWS PLAYING ROLE OF CONVENTIONAL POLITICAL
PARTY.)

9. WALID JUNBLATT RETURNS.

WALID JUNBLATT RETURNED TO BEIRUT JUNE 6 AFTER MEETING
WITH PRESIDENT SADAT IN EGYPT AND PRESIDENT AL BAKR IN BAGHDAD.
POLITICAL RHETORIC EMERGING FROM BAGHDAD VISIT IS MORE
REMINISCENT OF HIS FATHER'S REVOLUTIONARY STANCE THAN HIS
OWN MODERATE POSITIONS SINCE HE BEGAN POLITICAL CAREER AFTER
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PAGE 03 BEIRUT 02764 02 OF 02 100733Z

HIS FATHER'S DEATH.
PARKER

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009

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Message Attributes

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Review Release Event: n/a
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Status: NATIVE
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Type: TE
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